

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

S E C R E T STATE 049411

LIMDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 049411 SENT ACTION VIENTIANE INFO LONDON,
MOSCOW, NEW DELHI & WARSAW DATED 12 MAR 1974:

QTE

S E C R E T STATE 049411

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CA, LA

SUBJECT: CANADIAN INTENTIONS RE ICC/LAOS

REF; A. VIENTIANE 1737; B. STATE 195908, OCT 2, 1973

1. WILLIAMSON (MINISTER) AND FRASER (FIRST SECRETARY) OF
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CANADIAN EMBASSY CALLED ON DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY

STEARNS MARCH 11 TO REPORT CANADIAN POSITION REGARDING ICC/LAOS. FOLLOWING IS SUMMARY MEMCON OF THAT MEETING.

2. WILLIAMSON STATED THAT CANADIAN GOVERNMENT (GOC) HAS DECIDED TO ASK FOR A SPECIAL SESSION OF THE LAOS/ICC TO PROPOSE IT ADJOURN SINE DIE. HE SAID THAT CANADIAN DECISION IS BASED ON THE FACT THAT THE ICC, CREATED UNDER

1962 GENEVA AGREEMENTS, HAS BEEN INACTIVE AND INEFFECTIVE UP TO THE PRESENT TIME. FORMED UNDER THE 1962 ACCORDS, THE ICC IS NOT OBLIGATED TO UNDERTAKE NEW RESPONSIBILITIES OR FUNCTIONS. THE GOC BELIEVES THAT UNDER THE NEW CIRCUMSTANCES THE ICC WOULD BE REDUNDANT. THE GOC BELIEVES THAT IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE RLG UNDERSTAND THAT THE 1962 OBLIGATION CANNOT CONTINUE INDEFINITELY.

3. WILLIAMSON SAID THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD BE INFORMING THE RLG, THE OTHER PARTICIPANTS ON THE ICC, THE CO-CHAIRMAN OF THE '62 GENEVA ACCORDS, AND OTHER INTERESTED GOVERNMENTS; HOWEVER, HE DID NOT SAY WHEN THAT EFFORT WOULD TAKE PLACE.

4. STEARNS INDICATED HIS APPRECIATION FOR THE INFORMATION BUT SAID HE WAS SURPRISED AT THE TIMING OF THE CANADIAN DECISION. THE LAO COULD ONLY INTERPRET THE DECISION, COMING JUST BEFORE THE FORMATION OF A COALITION GOVERNMENT, AS A VOTE OF NO-CONFIDENCE IN THE LAO EFFORT. HE ASSURED WILLIAMSON OF THE US VIEW THAT THE ICC HAD INDEED PLAYED AN EXTREMELY HELPFUL ROLE IN RESTORING PEACE TO LAOS, PARTICULARLY IN STRENGTHENING SOUVANNA'S POSITION AS A CENTRAL FIGURE UNDER THE '62 ACCORDS. HE ALSO SUGGESTED THAT THE JOINT CENTRAL COMMISSION TO IMPLEMENT THE AGREEMENT (JCCIA), WHICH UP TO THIS TIME HAS BEEN TOTALLY PREOCCUPIED WITH PROBLEMS OF NEUTRALIZING THE TWO CAPITAL CITIES, COULD SOON TURN TO PROBLEMS OF DEVELOPING USEFUL TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE ICC.

5. IN RESPONDING, WILLIAMSON SAID THE CANADIANS HAD NO INTENTION OF DISCOURAGING THE LAO. INDEED, THE CANADIANS WISH THE LAO WELL IN THEIR EFFORTS. IN THIS REGARD, HE SAID, THE GOC IS CONSIDERING INITIATING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE LAO.

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TIONS WITH THE RLG. HE ALSO NOTED THAT CALLING FOR A SPECIAL SESSION OF THE ICC IS NOT TANTAMOUNT TO WITHDRAWAL FROM THE ICC. FURTHERMORE, EVEN IF THE ICC WERE TO ADJOURN, THE ADJOURNMENT WOULD NOT PRECLUDE MEETINGS OF THE ICC PARTICIPANTS IN, FOR EXAMPLE, NEW DELHI TO CONSIDER A LAO REQUEST FOR RECONVENING THE COMMISSION.

6. WILLIAMSON SUMMARIZED THE CANADIAN VIEW BY SAYING THE

LAO WERE NOW AT A WATERSHED, THE END OF AN OLD PERIOD;
AND THE OLD COMMISSION HAS REACHED AN END OF ITS USEFUL-
NESS. IN THE NEW PERIOD, A NEW ORGANISM WAS CALLED FOR.
IT COULD NOT BE ASSUMED THAT THE '62 COMMISSION WILL
CONTINUE INDEFINITELY.

7. STEARNS CONCLUDED BY REVIEWING US POSITION AS FOLLOWS:
WE BELIEVE THAT THE ICC HAS PLAYED HELPFUL ROLE IN LAOS;
AS THE COALITION GOVERNMENT IS FORMED, THERE IS A CHANCE
THAT MORE EFFECTIVE TERMS OF REFERENCE CAN BE DEVELOPED
FOR THE ICC; THIS POSSIBILITY SHOULD IN ANY CASE BE
EXPLORED WITH THE LAO PARTIES BEFORE DECIDING ON THE
FUTURE OF THE ICC; FAILURE TO DO THIS WOULD RISK TRANS-
MITTING TO THE LAO A SIGNAL, HOWEVER UNINTENTIONAL, THAT
THE ICC LACKED CONFIDENCE IN THEIR EFFORTS. END SUMMARY
MEMCON.

8. GOC APPROACH IS NOT A SURPRISE. IT WAS SIGNED BY
REF A. WHAT IS INTERESTING IS THE APPARENT DISTINCTION
BETWEEN CALLING FOR AN ICC MEETING TO CONSIDER ADJOURNMENT
AND THE POSSIBLE DECISION TO WITHDRAW UNILATERALLY (WHICH
APPARENTLY HAS NOT BEEN TAKEN). MUCH MAY DEPEND ON HOW THE
OTHER PARTIES RESPOND TO THE CANADIAN INITIATIVE.

9. FOR OTTAWA: IT WOULD BE HELPFUL HERE AND AT OTHER
ADDRESSEE POSTS TO HAVE AVAILABLE BACKGROUND OF AND
MOTIVATION FOR CANADIAN DECISION AND TIMING.

10. FOR NEW DELHI AND WARSAW: WHAT IS YOUR VIEW OF
POSSIBLE HOST GOVERNMENT REACTION TO CALL FOR ADJOURNMENT?

11. FOR VIENTIANE: RE PARA 4, REF B. HAVE YOU HAD ANY
INDICATION OF RLG APPROACHES TO CANADIANS ENCOURAGING
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THEIR CONTINUED PARTICIPATION AND GIVING HOPE OF MORE
WORKABLE TERMS OF REFERENCE? IF JCCIA WERE ABLE TO PRO-
VIDE TERMS OF REFERENCE OR AT LEAST MAKE FORMAL REQUEST
FOR ICC ACTION BEFORE GOC PROPOSES ADJOURNMENT, IT WOULD
MAKE THE LAO CASE FOR ICC CONTINUATION SOMEWHAT STRONGER.
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